

[0039] What is claimed is:

1. A hot contact adapter for a portable computing device, comprising:  
a plug for inserting into a power port in the portable computing device and providing electrical contact therewith, and  
a body extending from said plug, said body having a surface distal from said plug, said distal surface comprising a pair of generally flat electrodes electrically coupled to power input electrodes in said power port when said plug is inserted into the power port.
2. The adapter of claim 1 further comprising an alignment structure for orienting the adapter when said plug is inserted into the power port.
3. The adapter of claim 1 further comprising a releasable locking structure for securely holding the adapter in position when said plug is inserted into the power port.
4. The adapter of claim 1 wherein said plug is generally cylindrical.
5. The adapter of claim 1 wherein said distal surface is generally flat and said pair of generally flat electrodes is substantially co-planar with said distal surface.
6. The adapter of claim 1 wherein each of said pair of generally flat electrodes is substantially the same shape.
7. The adapter of claim 6 wherein each of said generally flat electrodes is substantially rectangular.
8. The adapter of claim 1 wherein said adapter is shaped to rest in a recess in a charging cradle.
9. The adapter of claim 1 wherein said adapter has at least one tapered wall extending from said distal surface.
10. The adapter of claim 1 wherein said alignment structure comprises at least one tabs for contacting a surface of the portable computing device.
11. The adapter of claim 1 wherein adapter is round.
12. A hot contact adapter for use with a computing device which mates with a charging cradle, said computing device having a recessed, generally cylindrical DC input power port, said adapter comprising:  
a plug which mates with and makes electrical contact with said input power port,  
a body connected to said plug, said body having a distal surface in relation to said portable computing device, said distal surface having a pair of generally flat electrodes

positioned thereon for mating with a pair of corresponding electrodes positioned on said charging cradle, and

an alignment structure.

13. The adapter of claim 12 further comprising an releasable locking mechanism for securely holding the adapter in position.

14. The adapter of claim 12 wherein said body projects from a surface of the portable computing device and said adapted has a shape which nests within a recess in the charging cradle.

15. The adapter of claim 12 wherein said alignment structure comprises at least one tab projecting from said body for contacting a wall of the portable computing device.

16. A system for providing easy recharging of a portable computing device, comprising:

a charging cradle for holding the portable computing device, said charging cradle having a connector for coupling to an external source of electrical power, and a pair of electrodes for supplying power to the portable computing device when the portable computing device is positioned in said charging cradle,

a removable adapter for connecting to a power input port on the portable computing device, said removable adapter having a pair of generally flat electrodes which contact said pair of electrodes on said charging cradle when the portable computing device is positioned in said charging cradle, such that electrical power is supplied to the portable computing device by said charging cradle via said adapter.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein a portion of said removable adapter projects from a surface of the portable computing device and nests within a recess in said charging cradle.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein said recess is substantially the same shape as said projecting portion of said adapter.

19. The system of claim 16 wherein at least one pair of said corresponding pairs of electrodes is spring biased.

20. A method of supplying power to a portable computing device, comprising:  
inserting a hot contact adapter into a power input port of said portable computing device, said adapter comprising an alignment mechanism so that it is correctly oriented when inserted into said power input port, said adapter further comprising a pair of electrodes on an external

surface thereof, said pair of electrodes being electrically coupled to corresponding electrodes in said power input port when said adapter is inserted into said power input port,

placing the portable computing device, with the adapter mounted thereon, into a charging cradle, said charging cradle comprising a connector for receiving electrical power from an external source and further comprising a pair of electrodes which contact said pair of electrodes on said adapter when said portable computing device is placed in said charging cradle,

connecting said connector on said cradle to a source of external power, such that electrical power is delivered to said power input port of said portable computing device via said adapter.